



**Ron C. Cross**

## A Season of Thankfulness and New Beginnings

*By Board of Commission Chairman Ron C. Cross*

As we return to our normal schedules after a season of feasting, celebration, and selflessness, I am reminded of the many individuals who work hard to make Columbia County a better place to live, work, and raise a family year-round.

The employees of Columbia County strive to provide necessary services to you in a convenient and pleasant manner. In an effort to streamline processes and to be cost-effective, the County has more than 1/3 less employees in comparison to other counties our size, yet the quality of our services remains exemplary. We hire great people and provide them with opportunities to further their education and gain new skills. Our emphasis on customer service has resulted in a 3-1-1 call center – the first in this area - for non-emergency calls dealing with everything from broken water mains to the time schedule for the fair. This is a wonderful resource for citizens and visitors alike.

Thousands of you volunteer your time to be of service to the County. The Recreation programs excel because of our volunteer coaches and referees, our CERT program has trained almost 200 individuals to help the community in the event of a large-scale emergency, and many serve on boards and authorities to advise the Board of Commission of a myriad of topics and activities pertinent to us all. Our volunteer firefighters serve diligently. They are highly-trained and supplement our first-class fire department.

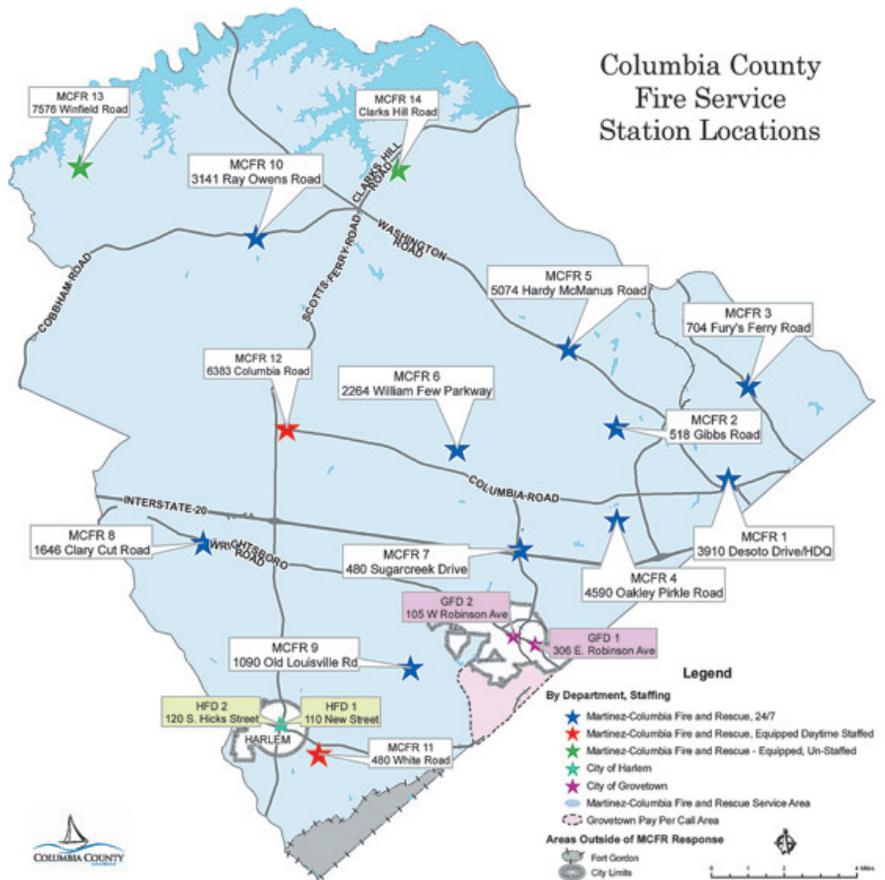
One of our best accomplishments will begin January 1st. At that time, we will have 24/7 staffed fire stations throughout the unincorporated area of the County. We are so grateful to all the fire service efforts in the past that have brought us to this point. Their valiant efforts and contributions in our behalf cannot be over-emphasized. The County has spent \$7.7 million to build stations and buy equipment for these new facilities. The unincorporated area will now have ten fully-staffed, 24/7 fire stations; two fully-staffed, daytime paid fire stations; and two fully-equipped, un-staffed fire stations – all covered by the Martinez-Columbia Fire Rescue – in the following geographic locations as also shown on the map:

- Martinez area – 2 stations
- Grovetown area – 2 stations
- Harlem area – 2 stations
- Evans area – 4 stations
- Appling area – 4 stations

The first annual National Day of Prayer Breakfast had a quiet start in 2005 and will be greatly expanded this year. Please mark May 4th on your schedules for this special event in 2006.

Consolidation is a topic that continues to be discussed in 2006. There will be two public meetings in January – January 10th at the Appling Courthouse at 6 PM and January 24th at the Evans Government auditorium at 6 PM. The benefits of consolidation are far-reaching and would be very important to our children and grandchildren.

On behalf of the Board of Commission, I wish you happiness, good health, and continued success in 2006!



You are cordially invited to The Gala

**Saturday, January 21, 2006**  
**7:00 – 11:00 p.m.**

Columbia County Library & Performing Arts Center  
720 N. Belair Road, Evans, GA

Please join us in previewing the new facility and raising funds for a grand piano and endowment.

\$100 per person

Black Tie

Heavy hors d'oeuvres

Entertainment will be provided by many area artists



## New Division Offers One Stop Services

The Building and Commercial Services Division has been created to offer a streamlined, one-stop service for citizens, businesses, developers, and contractors. The division is available to respond to citizens' complaints through the 311 phone system or by calling 706-868-3420, to receive and review commercial site and building plans, to perform building inspections, and to issue occupational taxes and building permits.



*Richard Harmon, Director of the Building and Commercial Services Division, seeks to offer more streamlined, one-stop services.*

The new division is under the direction of Richard Harmon, Building Official and Division Director, and consists of four sections:

1. Fire Marshal – Roy Rogers, Fire Marshal
2. Building Inspections – Ron St. Onge, Manager
3. Code Compliance – Linda Glasscock, Manager
4. Commercial Site Plan Review – Kevin Fort, Manager

The Fire Marshal section performs annual inspections on existing schools and commercial buildings along with plan review and inspections of new commercial buildings.

Building Inspections are performed for all new residential and commercial structures that have been permitted along with the plan review for commercial and residential structures.

The Code Compliance Department is setup to offer services to citizens who have complaints regarding nuisances such as inoperable vehicles, trash, and contractor complaints as well as dilapidated structures.

Commercial Site Plan Review accepts site plans for proposed projects and routes the plans through the system and manages the system in order to expedite the plans in a timely manner.

The Public Counter is available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to assist customers in the payment of occupational tax, purchase of building permits, and acceptance of all plan review.

## INCORPORATION/CONSOLIDATION MEETINGS

There will be two public meetings in January on the topic of incorporation/consolidation. The first meeting will be Tuesday, January 10th and will be held at the Appling Courthouse at 6 PM. The second meeting will be Tuesday, January 24th and will be held in the Evans Government auditorium at 6:00 PM at 630 Ronald Reagan Drive. A presentation by Columbia County staff will be made first and then questions will be taken from the public. All are invited to this meeting which is anticipated to last one hour!

## CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

**December 26th - January 31st**

**Columbia County Landfill**  
590 Baker Place Road  
Grovetown  
Mon-Fri 6 AM - 4 PM  
Sat 8 AM - 3 PM

**Riverside Middle School**  
1095 Fury's Ferry Road  
Evans

Around Thurmond Lake for use as fish habitat reefs  
Amity Boat Ramp      Keg Creek Boat Ramp  
Cherokee Boat Ramp      Scott's Ferry Boat Ramp

## Bring One for the CHIPPER



Home Depot will only be taking trees through

**Saturday, January 7, 2006**

*Mulch and tree seedlings given in exchange for your tree on this day, while supplies last. Please remove all decorations.*

## Road Improvements

### Mullikin Road

Columbia County has contracted with Beam's Contracting to construct sidewalks on Mullikin Road at River Ridge Elementary.



### North Belair Road

Currently, Apac Southeast, Inc. and the Road Construction Department are working on North Belair Road at Ronald Reagan Drive. This project widens the portion of roadway at North Belair Road at Ronald Reagan Drive and installs traffic signals at the intersection.

